

The

DIAMOND

1582

no. 1 (1961)



"Will it never end?"

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The

Diamond

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DIAMOND NOVELETTE:

Between pages 12 and 13 of this issue, a 24 page story,
THE ETERNAL GAME.

EDITOR
N. MacCaud

FEATURE WRITER
Jim Cox

ARTIST
Ron L. Sears

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ABOUT OUR COVER

This is how we greet the New Year. It's sad, but nevertheless funny. Cover designer Sears has reached the end. He's gone, but we still have several of his covers to carry us through until summer, by which time we might even have an idea of our own. Sears isn't dead, by the way, just discharged from the prison.

TO OUR READERS:

We've got something different for you this month. A Penal Press *first*, we think. One of the Diamond staffers was told to write a *short story* for the January issue. He had no trouble finding a theme. And he had no trouble getting started. But it must have been hard to stop, because he turned in a *short novel*.

We liked it. So, we are passing it along to you. This novelette—complete in this issue, just like Sat. Eve Post—can only be classified as science-fiction. But it's not far-out S-F. As a matter of fact, it starts out on a little planet named Gombar—only a few million light years from good old Terra. Seriously, if you are a science-fiction addict, you should enjoy Jim Cox's ETERNAL GAME. If you haven't read this type of story before, please try this one.

It was handy having this long story, though, because the entire Diamond staff was pulled off the magazine to work on a float for Kingston's Santa Claus Parade. This took just over a week, but it threw our already haphazard schedule even farther out of line. R. E. Porter was assigned the task of writing up our efforts on the float, but our understandably biased editor insisted on using photos of the float and had he been able to scrape up the money, would have had a four-colour lithograph on the center spread.

Lex Schrag has been good to us again. Mr. Schrag works for the Toronto Globe and Mail in the daytime and for the Diamond at night. He *must* work nights, because he always has his copy on our desk before the rest of us have even thought about our assignments. But then the churl finds it a little easier after many, many years' experience. . . counting double time for overtime, of course!

Now that the commercial's over, we hope you'll read some of the forty-eight pages that follow. And if you like any of it, please write and let us know—we send all those letters to the Parole Board.

--- inmates & officers contribute

fairy-tale float

to Xmas Parade ---

by R.E. Porter

"The officers' club will pay for it and the inmates can design and build it. Now go to it!"

Those were the instructions covering the building of a float for Kingston's Santa Claus Parade, held last November 26th. The orders were given on November 14th.

The Little Miss Muffet theme was decided upon simply because we couldn't remember another nursery rhyme. It turned out well, though, because there was no clash of ideas and on a crash building programme like this there was no time for arguments. The editor of this unworthy journal was told to assemble a crew to construct the float. He took Jim Cox and Ron Sears of the Diamond staff and then looked around for someone useful. Rocco Morrissetti had just completed his welding course and was hired to do the metal work. Tommy Saito was rumoured to be the best carpenter in the institution and he was also hired. When it came time to paint the contrap-



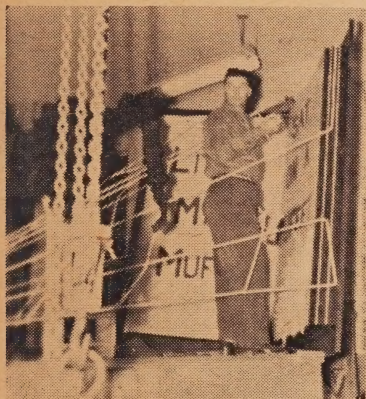
Welder Morrissetti posing with his "creature"; the metal framework of the spider.

tion. Frank Belliveau was told to clean out his spray gun and start mixing paints.

Jim Cox was the man largely responsible for the design of the float, though Sears and the editor put in an occasional word — which was promptly disregarded by Cox. Actual construction started on Saturday morning, November 19th. An old farm wagon was hauled into the Vocational Plumbing shop and the book that adorned the rear of the float was assembled. It became obvious that while the float could be assembled in the Plumbing Shop, it could never be driven out the doors. Mr. Babcock was prevailed upon

to loan us a bay in the Vocational Garage and construction went forward.

Many of the fellows worked at their regular jobs during the day and went out at night to work on the float. The editor was one of these. He did nothing all day, as was his custom, and got in the way all night. Work progressed with all the officers and inmates of the institution co-operating on the project. When advice was needed on construction, men were called in who knew what they were talking about. The Friday morning before parade day it



Mr. "Hub" Macey helping with the finishing touches.

appeared that the float might not be ready. The crew assembled for this project all stood back and looked in fear at the large flowered chair on the float's front. It required a lot of sewing and there was not a tailor in the crew. The call went out for tailors and Richard Norris and Donald Wilson

came on the run. Needles in hand, they finished the stitching at eight o'clock Friday night.



Left to right: Painter Frank Belliveau; Tailors Don Wilson and Richard Norris, with the finished chair.

All that remained was to trim the wagon. The three Diamond staffers took on this final task and at 11:30 on the night before the parade they had it completed — almost. They ran out of cotton batten, the all purpose covering that they used to whiten the float. They thought of praying for snow to cover the bare spots, but warm temperature and clear skies showed the futility of that.

In the fashion of all inmate projects, the float was completed as it was towed out the front gate on its way to join the parade. But it *was* completed and all the inmates who worked on it felt a sense of accomplishment. The float was built as a public relations project and to help in Kingston's parade. From all reports, the children liked it — and that means it was a success.

After returning from the Kingston

parade, the float was repaired and sent to nearby Napanee the following week. It must have been a success there, too, because it took first prize.

Notes: The number of officers and men who pitched in to help us build the float are too numerous to list here, but special mention should be made of

Mr. "Hub" Macey, who worked the day shift with us and also stayed a couple of nights, and Mr. Nurse from garage construction. Mr. Nurse supplied the spider's eyes — truck tail-lights — and made the supreme sacrifice by giving up his office chair for the front of the float.



Miss Suzanne Good portrays MISS MUFFET as the float leaves the prison to join Kingston's Santa Claus Parade.

.... holler 'Psychiatrist!' if one of the moppets

starts toddling across the ceiling."

PROBATION

by Lex Schrag

Diamond Correspondent

(Temporarily)

At Large

Probation officers are odd birds. They'd like to put themselves out of business. They earn their living by looking after the jug-heads who tangle with John Law, yet they keep trying to work out ways of preventing crime.

Waving my press card from The Diamond, I walked in on Wally Bunton and Bill Outerbridge. They're the top men of the York County probation set-up, which includes Toronto.

Wally handles administration; Bill supervises the case load. (This has nothing to do with beer; the boys and girls on probation aren't thugs, bandits or winos to them, they're cases. And some of them are, at that.)

This probation business has been given quite a bit of space and air time. To get a new angle for The Diamond, I asked what ideas they had about heading the youngsters off before they got into trouble. No sense in overcrowding the provincial and federal jugs. Move too many new boarders in, and they sort of lose their tone.

Well, they figured the best people to put on the job would be the school-marms. Not much use expecting the parents to turn little Ethelbert in if he shows signs of stripping his gears.

Parents, it seems, are apt to be inconsistent. They range all the way from Pious Pete who whales the hide off his kid if he says "darn!" to the Witless Willie who thinks it's cute if Junior pulls the legs off a kitten.

So, say Messrs Bunton and Outerbridge, give the teachers a few courses in mental health and get them to ride herd on the nippers. They won't have to distinguish a manic depressive from a paranoid. All they have to do is holler 'Psychiatrist!' if one of the moppets starts toddling across the ceiling. Or even clams up real tight and won't make with answers to such reasonable questions as "Do you HAVE to go?"

The probation officers, of course, are looking at the problem from the viewpoint of the big city organization. There are plenty of agencies around Toronto to help straighten a youngster out if he gets off the rails: psychiatric clinics, special classes, all sorts of service and welfare groups.

It looks, though, as if the big city is where most of the trouble starts. There are 26 officers on the York

County staff; 17 of them look after city cases; the other nine handle all the suburbs and the rest of York County. And there's more population in the Metro suburbs than there is in the city.

Anyway, these probation people are all for having the populace live righteous and lawful lives. First of all, because they don't like to see human beings caged like animals, even if it is their own fault.

And, secondly, because slinging a guy into the pokey makes him an economic liability. He costs the taxpayer \$1,500 a year in a jail, \$1,800 in a reformatory and \$2,000 per annum in a pen. Whereas, the 8,250 adults on probation in Ontario last year earned around \$15,000,000, and coughed up \$75,000 in restitution to the people they had

gougued.

The provincial probation services act for the John Howard Societies in Ontario localities where the Society has no branches — except that provincial probation officers have no funds at their disposal. They have to do a bit of scrounging if a parolee is up against it.

So The Diamond's idea about a transit camp for prisoners from the penitentiaries was dragged up. The two probation supervisors were all for it. They agreed that a man who had been segregated from the rest of society for a few years needed to be eased back into the picture. And they added that though the job wasn't their responsibility, they'd be glad to help ease the easing.

WE HAD TO PASS THIS ONE ALONG!

An inmate had written an article for the DIAMOND. The subject was the loneliness he felt and what he thought was a lack of understanding. He was feeling a little sorry for himself and no doubt putting it down on paper helped make him feel a little better. Explaining his feelings about religion, he said:

"As far as my thoughts on religion are concerned, I am a firm believer in Jesus Christ. But then I must admit that if I were a practicing believer I wouldn't have all these troubles. It seems as if our Parole Board are not Christians, though. I've been waiting three years and the good Lord has yet to get through to them!"

RED CROSS

MOBILE CLINIC

Returns to Col-in's Bay

Starting early and finishing late, a Mobile Clinic from Ottawa pried and wheedled 307 pints of blood from 305 men. This represented just over 71% of our population.

While the number of pints donated was down numerically from the last clinic, so was our population and there was actually a slight gain in the percentage of men who gave their blood. However, it is the pints that count, not percentages, so we can only hope that we will increase our donations next time. Without a corresponding increase in the inmate population, of course.

Inmates in federal prisons all across Canada have been donating the bright red liquid to the Red Cross for over a decade now, and surely we have given more blood, in proportion, than any other segment of Canada's population. One man here has given 47 times, another 36, many are in the twenties and only a few are first timers.

Possibly the greatest clinic ever held in Canada was the last one at St. Vincent de Paul Pen near Montreal. 1246 men gave blood for a record shattering 88.3% of the prison population.

Why do prisoners queue up to give their blood? We certainly don't like the needle any more than you out there. It's true that we have more *free* time on our hands. And we are not unappreciative of the ladies who work at these clinics. But these are still not the "reasons why" for 305 men. (The other two pints, by the way, were given by men who donated *twice* during the day. A verboten practice, but they did it nevertheless.)



Do men here give as a partial atonement for past sins? Does it assuage consciences to give? Do they feel they are saving a life? I don't know and neither do the other men. I do know, however, that if the call goes out for blood to help a sick child or dying person, prison inmates all over North America are quick to respond.

But, then, as we said before, they have the *free* time.

CANADIAN Penal Press

1960 has been a good year for the Penal Press in Canada. Some of the changes we have been advocating for years have begun to take place and with the appointment of Commissioner A. J. MacLeod, we have hopes that 1961 will be a big year for the men behind walls in Canada. And the Penal Press itself has improved.

Moving from Dorchester Pen in the east to New Westminster in the Rockies, this is how we see Canada's prison publications:

THE BEACON: This is the only mimeographed magazine on the Canadian scene. The amount of work that goes into a publication like this awes us, and still it is often better in appearance than any of the others. Top layout work and, considering the limitations, good illustration. Your regular features are enjoyed here.

PEN-O-RAMA: This is a bi-lingual. One half is French and the other half English, all bound together. Printed and written by the men in St. Vincent de Paul Pen, just outside Montreal, we suspect that PEN-O-RAMA is the wealthiest magazine on the circuit. We counted twenty advertisers in their Xmas issue and besides, if they weren't wealthy why would they keep mailing everyone two editions? Seems to us they could cut costs at least a third by asking subscribers which edition they would prefer and mailing that one to them. That way, a 32-page edition would be 32 pages — not 64 as at present. And just in case you fellows think we're picking on you, your mag is in demand here at the Bay and is enjoyed thoroughly by our French speaking population. Besides, we're jealous of your popularity with the advertising dollar.

K.P. TELESCOPE: Ah ha! According to your last issue, your population and the National Parole Board aren't exactly having a romance. Over here just five miles away, PAROLE is the favourite subject. And many good paroles coming through, too. Just prior to Xmas there were about 18 — some short ones but also a few long ones (two over 3 years). But back to your magazine: We like Yen Hop Gow, thought Eileen Beaton's *Bad Day* bit was good, but we still haven't got a clue what the lead story,

NATURE'S LABORATORY, was about. Lou gives us the news but causes *The Diamond* much trouble. Our inmates want a carbon copy of his column, but we don't think it's in the interest of better public relations. And your contributors from the Women's Prison certainly add to the magazine. Naomi Green's factual reporting takes the reader right through the house on Palace Road. Just one question before we leave: How much does Coke come through with per issue?

The DIAMOND: This magazine has one BIG trouble: It needs subscribers. It needs a great many other things, too, but more subscribers means more money and the money is used to improve the publication. (You shouldn't have been caught off guard by this commercial. We're half-way through the article and that, according to most sponsors, is the place for the sales pitch.)

MOUNTAIN ECHOES: From Stoney Mountain Pen, near Winnipeg, this mag has money problems. You've got good covers, a nice format for inmate appeal, but little for the outside reader. A little secret we've discovered: it's the guy on the street that has the buck you need to expand, not the guy in the cell block. We have noted that you didn't believe the recently announced amenities would become reality. Got caught, too, when a few changes were made before your mag reached the subscribers. Do you think the Department of Justice is going to move a little faster *now*? Rather than knocking them at this point, they need a boost if the public is to accept their proposals.

PATHFINDER: A plain, simple cover for Xmas, but the best we've seen on any of our publications. From Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, this publication is rising rapidly and one of their features, *TEN BOYS...TEN MEN*, has been of particular interest to us. An excellent idea, but it's hard to try for continuity without a printing schedule. Layout and printing are well done, but we'll be looking for a bigger issue in future.

TRANSITION: It wouldn't be fair to comment on your last issue (Sept.-Oct.). It looked as if you were just trying to fill space and on some pages you didn't succeed. We wouldn't knock this if you were just a new crew without experience. Fact is, you're capable of much better things and we've come to expect them from the Coast. With 627 men in the main prison you should have no trouble getting copy. And how about an article on William Head? We don't know much about this prison.

SHOW TIME



**Cliff
Tomlinson**



**Don
Manson**

Cliff Tomlinson and Don Manson, co-workers at CKWS radio and TV station, staged their first show at CBP after taking over from Joe Woodhouse and with them they brought many new faces.

The first of these new faces to grace our stage was a very pretty one indeed. Romona Tomlinson, Cliff's wife, danced her way through a baton twirling routine. Romona is the leader and trainer of a group of majorettes in Kingston and her demonstration proved she certainly has the skill to pass along.

Our emcee for the first half of this show, Cliff Tomlinson, introduced a young vocalist next. Sheila Canning convinced her audience of her sincerity when she sang *I Enjoy Being A Girl*, but later in the programme she changed her costume and lied her way through *I Can't Get A Man Without A Gun*. Unless Belleville has a male population that is totally blind, Sheila is probably besieged with suitors. A girl with a fine voice and the confidence and poise of a professional, Sheila added a great

deal to the afternoon's entertainment.

The next performer was the star of the afternoon. Bill Luxton, a very popular CKWS-TV personality, drew loud and long applause, interspersed liberally with laughs, when he sang, talked and joked with the audience. Bill is particularly good with impersonations of today's singing stars and his *Old Black Magic* was more like Billy Daniels than Billy himself.

Something new was next on our afternoon's menu of entertainment as four young aspirants in the comedy field, Jack Helperin (of CKWS's *Buckskin Bandwagon*), Patti Roche, Gloria Hoffman and Sheldon Luftspring, poked a little fun at the inmate audience with a satire skit about the criminal occupations. Some of the more tempera-

mental types in our ranks couldn't take the ribbing and showed their ignorance, much to the humiliation and chagrin of the majority of the men in the auditorium.



Hotel Dieu Nurses enjoying first portion of show in audience.

At this point the Nurses' Choir from Kingston's Hotel Dieu Hospital were called on stage and the girls sang a special medley of Carols entitled A Christmas Fantasia. The Hotel Dieu Choir lent a Yuletide aura to the afternoon and many of the men went back to the cell blocks singing and whistling some of the traditional Carols the girls had sung for us.



Enid Reynolds

After a short intermission, Don Manson took over the M.C. chores and

started the second portion of the programme of with another female vocalist, Miss Enid Reynolds. An instantaneous hit with the men here, Miss Reynolds has an excellent voice and could very well go places in the entertainment field once she develops poise and confidence in her ability. It would be worthwhile keeping an eye on Enid — and that is a pleasure in itself.



Backing for the show was provided by this group of musicians from CKWS.

At this point the CKWS band played several numbers and set the joint jumpin'. The ever popular Eva Howard then stepped front and center to sing Comes Along A Love and the Bobby Darrin version of Christmas Auld Lang Syne. Bringing the show to a close with an excellent finalé, Eva and the boys from CKWS made more friends among the younger set here with Jingle Bell Rock. As a matter of fact, some of the oldsters were tapping time with their canes, too.



SANTA

on the
main line



Don Manson receiving his Christmas present from Santa (Vince O'Neill).

For the first time ever, Santa Clause made an appearance at the feeding wicket of our kitchen. After the Tomlinson-Manson stage production, Vince O'Neill played the St. Nick role by distributing cigarettes to each man as he came through the line. The cigarettes, Players, Export and Buckingham were a most welcome gift and we would like to express our appreciation to all those involved. Helping to arrange for Santa's visit were: WALLY REWEGAN of CKWS Radio, WALLY ELMER of Patton's Cleaners, ADRIEN CRUJI of New Method Cleaners, R. H. TOYE & COMPANY, Kingston, JOHN DAVEY & SONS, Kingston, G. TAMBLYN DRUGS, Shopping Center, TUCKETT TOBACCO LIMITED, Hamilton, IMPERIAL TOBACCO LIMITED, Montreal, MacDONALD TOBACCO LIMITED, Montreal, and ROTHMAN OF PALL MALL (Canada) LIMITED, Toronto.

CAN WE INTEREST AN EDITOR?

The problem of leaving prison and "*making good*" is summed up in this interesting proposal by Erle Stanley Gardner:

"Some day I hope some enterprising newspaper will take a thoroughly reputable, honest, able individual, fit him out in a prison-made suit of clothes, give him twenty-five dollars, turn him loose in a strange city, tell him to make good, but at the same time tell him that he either can't tell any prospective employer where he has been during the past five years or can't give any character or other references. I would like to see the experiences of such an individual in print." *via Presidio*

THE ETERNAL GAME

by Jim Cox

PROLOGUE...

Excerpts from Official Gombarian Documents held in the Inter-Galactic Museum:

Reference

Date Capsule #12536-A—

Gombarian Home Army

military despatches,

. . .contact made with first alien life form. . .two type 9z aircraft sighted disabled space craft and forced it down, sector 63-f-5. . .occupant captured after brief skirmish.

Losses: 1 aircraft and pilot — 16 ground troops

.foreign craft destroyed. . .investigation proved craft and creature to be of Terran origin. . .prisoner transferred to custody of World Council for official interrogation and disposition. . . .

CHAPTER ONE

His leg-irons clanked and his wrist chains jingled as they led him into the room. The bonds on his arms and ankles compelled him to move in an awkward shuffle, and the guards delighted in urging him onward faster than he was able to go. Someone pointed to the chair facing the long table. Someone else shoved him into it with such force that he lost his balance and sat down very hard.

The back of his short-cropped hair jerked perceptibly as his scalp twitched, but that was the only outward reaction to the abuse. Then he gazed across the table with his light blue eyes, eyes so pale that the pupils seemed to be set in ice. The look was neither hostile nor friendly, submissive nor angry. It was just impassively and impartially cold.

On the other side of the table several Gombarians surveyed him with various expressions: triumph, disdain, satisfaction, boredom and curiosity. They were a humanoid bunch, these Gombarians, in the same sense that gorillas are humanoid; and at that point the resemblance ended.

"Now," began the one in the middle, making every third sound a grunt, "your name is Cliff Carson?"

No answer.

"You have come from a planet named Terra?"

No answer.

"Let us waste no more time, Palamin," suggested the one on the left of the speaker. "If he will not talk by invitation, then let him talk by compulsion."

"You are right Eckster!" Putting a hand under the table Palamin came up with a hammer-like object. It had a pear-shaped head and a flattened base. "How would you like every bone in your hand cracked, finger by finger, joint by joint?"

"I wouldn't," admitted Carson.

"A very sensible reply," approved Palamin. He placed the hammer in the middle of the desk, positioning it significantly. "Already many days have been spent teaching you our language. By this time even a child could have learned it well enough to understand and answer questions."

He favoured the prisoner with a hard stare. "You have pretended to be abnormally slow to learn. But you can deceive us no longer. You will now provide the information for which we ask."

"Willingly or unwillingly," put in Eckster, licking his thin lips, "but you'll provide it anyway."

"Correct," agreed Palamin. "Let's start all over again and see if we can avoid painful scenes. Your name is Cliff Carson and you come from a planet named Terra?"

"I admitted that much when I was captured."

"We know, but you were not fluent at that time and we want no misunderstandings. Why did you land on Gombar?"

"I've told my tutor at least twenty times that I did it inadvertently. It

was an emergency landing. My ship was disabled."

"Then why did you blow it up?" questioned Palamin. "And why did you not make open contact with us, and invite us to repair it for you?"

"No Terran vessel can be allowed to fall into the hands of hostile people," replied Carson flatly.

"Hostile?" Palamin tried to assume a look of pained surprise, but his face wasn't made for it. "Since you Terrans know nothing about us, what right have you to consider us hostile?"

"I wasn't kissed on arrival," Carson retorted. "I was shot at coming down. I was shot at getting away from my ship. I was hunted across twenty miles of land, grabbed and beaten up."

"Our soldiers do their duty," Palamin observed virtuously.

"I'd be dead right now, if they weren't the lousiest marksmen this side of Cygnus."

"And what's Cygnus?"

"A star."

"Who are you to criticize our soldiers?" interjected Eckster, glowering.

"A Terran," informed Carson, as if that explained more than enough.

"That means nothing to me," Eckster gave back in open contempt.

"It will."

Palamin took over again. "If friendly contact were wanted, the Terran authorities would have sent a greater size ship with official deputation on board, wouldn't they?"

"I don't think so," Carson answered.

"Why not?"

"We don't risk big boats and important people without knowing what sort of reception they'll get when they land."

"And who digs up that information?"

"Space scouts."

"Ah!" Palamin gazed around with all the pride of a pygmy who has just trapped an elephant, "So at last you admit you are a spy?"

"I am a spy only in the estimation of the hostile," Carson defended.

"On the contrary," broke in the heavy-jowled specimen on Palamin's right, "you are whatever we say you are — because we say it!"

"Have it your own way," conceded Carson.

"We intend to."

"You can be sure of that, my dear Borkor," soothed Palamin. He returned to the prisoner. "How many Terrans are there in existence?"

"About twelve thousand millions."

"He is lying!" exclaimed Borkor, hungrily eyeing the hammer.

"One planet could not support such a number," Eckster reasoned.

"They are scattered over a hundred planets," said Carson.

"He is still lying," Borkor maintained and his eyes stole back to the hammer.

Waving them all down, Palamin asked, "And how many ships have they got?"

"I regret that mere space scouts are not entrusted with fleet statistics," replied Carson coolly. "I can only say that I haven't got the slightest idea."

"You must have some idea."

"If you want guesses, you can have them. For what they're worth."

"Make a guess!"

"One million."

"Nonsense!" declared Palamin. "Utterly absurd!"

"All right then, one thousand, or one hundred — or any other number

you consider reasonable."

Palamin turned and spoke to the others, "What did you expect? If we were to send a spy to Terra, would we fill him up with top secret information? Or would we tell him just enough—and only enough—to enable him to carry out his task? The ideal spy is a shrewd ignoramus, able to take all and give nothing."

The questioning continued. Carson listened and answered almost automatically. The same questions had been asked of him before and he was giving the same answers. He hadn't been sent here as a spy. He hadn't, in fact, even been sent to Gombar. "His destination was a large, forty-planet system. His superiors didn't waste time with insignificant three-planet systems like Gombar.

He had tried to explain this, to tell the Gombarians that his civilization, the Terrans, had spread throughout the universe. They had settled on over one hundred planets and never had they arrived as invaders. If there was intelligent life on a planet, the Terrans made contact with them and, if they were friendly, negotiated for permission to establish a colony. If the other life form was hostile and didn't want Terrans on its planet, the earth people respected their wishes and didn't interfere. It was thought better to not waste time and money fighting when both could be used to much more advantage exploring and exploiting. The Terran government had finally discovered that in the vastness of the universe there was room for more than one form of life.

Carson was no longer amused by the questioning. These inferior beings had the upper hand temporarily, but

they were, after all, rather primitive. There was no doubt in his mind that other Terrans were even now speeding to his rescue. And he didn't doubt, either, that given time they would effect his rescue.

He had answered the Gombarian's questions truthfully — in most cases. Yes, he had said, the Terrans have warships. But they only use their battleships as a deterrent force and to ward off attacks by aggressor planets. Terrans were not militant beings, he had said, they were peace-loving.

But the Gombarians had looked at each other knowingly and asked, "If you are pacifists, why are you armed to the teeth?" They had accused him of lying, of being the advance spy for a great fleet of warships. Nothing he said got through to them. Politically, they were tens of thousands of years behind Terra. They were still in the nationalistic stage where anything could be turned into a moral justification for war. Then the questioning stopped. The Gombarians were talking the thing over amongst themselves.

"It doesn't matter where he was headed. Even if it was the twin system of Halor and Ridi, instead of Gombar, he is still a spy," Palamin observed.

"And now the Terrans know about us and our system," put in Borkor.

"No," Eckster corrected, "this one knows it, the others do not. And the longer they don't, the better for us. When another life form — even one as hideous and inferior as this Terran — pokes its nose into Gombar, we need time to muster our strength."

This brought a general murmur of agreement. The Gombarians looked from one to the other and a decision

seemed to have been reached.

Carson sighed, but knew it was useless to argue further. They just couldn't understand.

Palamin addressed Carson, "Your admissions before this board are equal to a confession that you are a spy. It does not matter that you were under orders to poke your inquisitive nose into this or some other world — you are still a spy." He turned to the others, "Are we all agreed?"

They chorused an immediate "Yes".

"Then," Palamin spoke to Carson again, "you will be returned to a cell pending official execution." He made a gesture of dismissal, "Take him away."

CHAPTER TWO

The guards took him by the simple process of jerking the chair out from under him and then kicking him erect. They tried to push him out quicker than he could go. He stumbled in his leg-irons and almost fell. But he managed time to throw one swift glance back into the room and his strangely pale eyes looked frozen and, for the first time, a little afraid.

When the elderly Warden brought his evening meal in, Carson asked, "How do they execute people here?"

"How do they do it where you come from?" was the reply.

"They don't."

"You don't?" The Warden blinked his amazement. Putting the tray on

the floor, he took a seat near Carson, leaving the heavily barred grille wide open. The butt of his gun protruded from its holster, within easy reach of the prisoner's grasp. "Then how do you handle dangerous criminals?"

"We cure the curable by whatever means are effective—including brain surgery. The incurable we deport to a lonely planet reserved exclusively for them. There they can fight it out among themselves."

"What a waste of a world!" opined the Warden. In a casual manner he drew his gun, pointed it at the wall and pressed the firing button. Nothing happened. "Empty," he said.

Carson made no remark.

"No use in your snatching it. No use in your running for it either. The armoured doors and loaded guns are all outside."

"I'd have to get rid of these manacles before I could start anything with any hope of success," Carson pointed out. "Are you open to bribery?"

"With what? The clothes you're wearing?" the Warden scoffed.

"All right, forget it." Carson rattled his iron chains loudly and looked disgusted. "You haven't told me how I'm to die."

"Oh, you'll be strangled in public," informed the Warden, and then smacked his lips for no apparent reason. "All executions take place in the presence of the populace. It is not enough that justice be done. It must also be seen to be done, so everybody sees it. It has an excellent disciplinary effect." Again he smacked his lips, "It's quite a spectacle."

"I'm sure it must be."

"You will be made to kneel with

your back to a post, your arms and ankles will be tied behind it. There is a hole drilled through the post at the level of your neck. A loop of cord goes around your neck and through the hole, then around a stick on the other side. The executioner twists the stick, thereby tightening the cord, quickly or slowly, according to his mood."

"I suppose that when he feels artistic, he prolongs the agony by slackening and tightening the rope a few times?" Carson ventured.

"No, no," assured the Warden, "he's not permitted to do that!" Blind to Carson's sarcasm, he continued, "Not in a final execution. That method is used only to extract confessions from the stubborn. We are a fair-minded and gentle hearted people, you see."

"You are a great comfort to me," said Carson.

"You will be handled swiftly and efficiently. I have witnessed many executions and have yet to see a sloppy or badly performed one. The body heaves and strains against its bonds, the eyes stick out, the tongue protrudes and turns black, and then — complete collapse. The effect is invariably the same and is actually a tribute to the executioner's skill. Really, you have nothing to worry about — nothing at all."

"Looks like I haven't, the way you put it," observed Carson dryly, "I'm right on top of the world with nothing to lose except my breath." He brooded a bit, then asked, "When am I due for the noose?"

"Immediately after you've finished your game," said the Warden.

Carson eyed him blankly, "Game? What game? What do you mean?"

"It's conventional to allow a condemned man a last game against a skilled player chosen by us. When the game ends, the condemned man is taken away and strangled."

"Win or lose?"

"The result makes no difference. He is executed regardless of whether he is the winner or the loser."

"Sounds crazy to me," Carson said, frowning.

"It would, you being an alien," replied the Warden condescendingly, "but surely you'll agree that a person facing death is entitled to the privilege of putting up a last minute fight for his life?"

"A pretty useless fight."

"That may be so, but every minute of delay is precious to the one concerned." The Warden rubbed his hands together appreciatively, "I can tell you that nothing is more thrilling than a person's death-match, especially against a clever player."

"Is that so?"

"Yes. You see, he cannot possibly play in a normal manner. For one thing, his mind is obsessed by his impending fate while his opponent is bothered by no such problem. For another, he dare not let the other man win — and he dare not let him lose either. He has to concentrate all his faculties on preventing a decisive result and prolonging the game for as long as possible. And, of course, he is always mentally and morally handicapped by the knowledge that the end is bound to come."

"Bet it gives you a great big kick, eh?" Carson interjected.

This time the Warden sucked his lips before smacking them. "Many a felon have I watched playing in a cold

sweat, with ingenuity born of desperation. Then, with the final move he has fainted and rolled off the chair. We've carried them out as limp as an empty sack. Most times, when they come around they find themselves on their knees, facing the crowd and waiting for the first twist."

"It isn't worth the bother," decided Carson, "no player can last long."

"Usually they don't," admitted the Warden. "But I've known exceptions; tough and expert gamblers who managed to postpone death for five or six days. There was one fellow, a professional ALIZIK player, who naturally chose his own game. He avoided a decision for sixteen days. He was so good it was a pity he had to die. A lot of television viewers were sorry when the end came."

"Oh, so you show these death matches on television?"

"It's the most popular show. Pins them to their chairs, I can assure you."

"Hmmm," Carson thought a bit, then asked, "Suppose this TV star had been able to keep the game going for a year or so; would he have been allowed to do so?"

"Of course," came the reply. "Nobody can be put to death until his last game has been completed. You could call it a superstition, I guess, but what's more, the rules say that the condemned must be fed while playing. If he wished, he could eat like a king. All the same, they rarely eat much."

"Don't they?"

"No. They're so nervous that their stomachs refuse to hold a square meal. Occasionally the player is sick right in the middle of a game. When I see one do that, I know the game won't last out another day."

"You've had plenty of fun in your time," Carson observed.

"Quite often," the Warden admitted, "but not always. Bad players bore me beyond description. They give the video watchers the gripes. They start a game, fumble it right away, go off to the strangling post, and that's the end of them. The greatest pleasure for all is when some character makes a battle of it."

"Fat chance I've got," mused Carson, "I've no knowledge of Gombarian games and you people don't know any Terran ones."

"Any game can be learned in a short time, and the choice is yours. Naturally you won't be allowed to choose a game that involves letting you loose without your chains. It must be some game that can be played in this cell. Want some good advice?"

"Give."

"This evening an official will arrive to arrange the contest, after which he'll find you a suitable opponent. Don't ask to be taught one of our games. No matter how clever you may be, your opponent will be better because he'll be handling something familiar while you are coping with the strange. Select one of your own planet's games and thus give yourself the advantage."

"Thanks for the suggestion. It might do some good if defeat were death, but victory meant life."

"I've already told you that the result makes no difference. The end is the same."

"There you are, then. Some choice, huh?"

"You can at least choose between death in the morning and death the next morning — or even the morning after that." Getting up from the bench,

the Warden walked out, closing the grille and locking it. Through the bars he said, "Anyway, I'll bring you a book giving full details of all our indoor games. You'll have plenty of time to read it before the official arrives."

"Nice of you," said Carson, "but I think you're wasting your time."

CHAPTER THREE

Left alone, Cliff Carson let his thoughts mill around. They weren't pleasant thought. Space scouts belonged to a highly risky profession, and none knew it better than they themselves. Cheerfully, each of them accepted the dangers on the age-old premise that "it always happens to the other guy, never to one's self". But now it had happened to him, to Cliff Carson. He ran his fingers around the inside of his collar, which now seemed to feel a little tight.

When he had dived through the clouds with two of their rather primitive aircraft blasting fire at him from either side, he had pressed alarm button "D". This caused a transmitter to start flashing a brief but complicated message giving his co-ordinates and defining the planet as enemy territory.

Earlier, and many thousands of miles out in space, he had reported his intentions of making an emergency landing and had identified the chosen world

with the same co-ordinate. Button "D" would therefore confirm his first message and also add serious doubt about his fate.

Immediately after landing he'd switched on the delayed action charge and taken to his heels. The planes were still buzzing around. One of them swooped low over his disabled ship just as it blew up. Both craft disintegrated in the blast. The other aircraft gained altitude and circled around, directing the search for him. To judge by the speed by which the troops arrived, he must have had the misfortune to have dumped himself in the middle of a military area, full of goons in uniform and eager for blood. They had expressed their disapproval of him with fists and feet.

Right now there was no way of telling whether Terran listening posts had picked up his "D" alarm or not. Odds were greatly in favour of it since it was on a top priority channel on which a round-the-clock vigil was kept. He didn't doubt for a moment, that having received the message, they would do something about it.

The trouble was, whatever they did would be useless as far as he was concerned. It would come too late. In this very sector patrolled Terra's largest, newest, most powerful battleship: The Dunlop. If the Dunlop happened to be on patrol at her nearest routine point, it would take her ten months to reach Gombar at maximum velocity. If she had returned to port, temporarily replaced by an older and slower vessel, the delay might last years.

Two years was two years too long. Ten months was ten months too long. Carson couldn't even wait ten weeks. In fact, it was highly probable he

wouldn't last ten days. Time, time; how impossible to stretch it for a man and to compress it for a ship.

The Warden reappeared and pressed a book through the bars. "Here you are, Carson," he smiled, "you've learned enough to understand it."

"Thanks."

Lying full length on the bench, Carson read it through, swiftly but quite comprehensively. Some pages he skipped after a glancing at them because they described games too short, simple and childish to be worth considering. He was not surprised to find that many games were alien variations of ones well known on Terra. The Gombarians had playing cards, for instance, but eighty to a pack with ten suits.

ALIZIK proved to be a bigger and more complicated version of Chess, with four hundred squares and forty pieces per side. This was the game someone had dragged out for sixteen days. It was the only game in the book that appeared capable of such extension. For a while Carson pondered over ALIZIK, wondering if the authorities — and the video audience — would tolerate play at the rate of one move every ten hours. He doubted it. Anyway, he could not prevent his opponent from making his answering move in five seconds.

Yes, that was what he really wanted, a game that would slow down the other fellow in spite of his efforts to speed up. A game that was obviously a game and not a gag—yet a game that the other fellow could not finish, win or lose, no matter how hard he tried.

There wasn't any such game on the three worlds of Gombar. Or the hundred worlds of Terra, for that matter.

Nor was there likely to be one on the multi-millions of worlds yet unfound. There just couldn't be, because if there were, nobody would play it. People like results. No one is stupid enough to waste time, thought and patience doing something that gets them nowhere; indulging in a rigamarole that cannot be terminated to the satisfaction of all concerned including the kibitzers.

But nobody!

No?

Carson got up from the bench and began to shuffle across his cell restlessly, the cold eyes expressionless but with the trace of a smile tugging at the corners of his mouth.

CHAPTER FOUR

**"WHEN THE LAST MOVE IS MADE
GOD'S PLAN WILL BE FULFILLED: ON
THAT DAY, IN THAT HOUR, AND AT
THAT MOMENT, THE UNIVERSE WILL
VANISH IN A MIGHTY THUNDER-
CLAP."**

The official had an enormously large pot-belly, small pig-eyes and a sickly smile that remained permanently fixed. His manner was that of a circus ring-master about to introduce his best act.

"Ah," he began, noticing the book, "so you have been studying our games, eh?"

"Yes," Carson answered.

"I do hope you have found none of

them suitable."

"Do you?" Carson surveyed him quizzically, "Why?"

"It would be a welcome change to witness a contest based on something right out of this world." He smiled, "A genuinely new game would give a lot of satisfaction to everybody. Provided, of course, that it was easy to understand and that you did not win or lose too quickly."

"Well, I must admit I'd rather handle something I'm familiar with than something I don't know."

"Good! Good!" exclaimed the excited official, "You prefer to play a Terran game, then?"

"That's right."

"There are some limitations on your choice."

"What are they?" Carson asked, a little fearfully.

"Once we had a condemned man who wanted to oppose his games partner in seeing who could catch a sun-beam in a bottle first. It was nonsensical, of course, and couldn't be allowed. You must choose something that obviously and beyond question can be accomplished."

"I see."

"Secondly, you may not select something that involves the use of expensive or intricate equipment that will take a long time to manufacture. If apparatus is required it must be cheap and easy to construct."

"Is that all?"

"Yes, — except the complete rules must be inscribed by you, in clear writing and unambiguously," he said, "Once play begins, no variation of them will be allowed."

"And who approves my choice after I have described it?"

"I do," the official informed importantly.

"All right, here's what I'd like to play." Carson explained it in detail, borrowing the official's pen to make a rough sketch. When Carson had finished, the official folded the sheet of paper and put it in his pocket.

"A strange game, and to me it seems disappointingly simple. Do you really think you can make the contest last a whole day?" he finished hopefully.

"I hope so," Carson allowed.

"Even two days, perhaps?"

"With luck."

"You'll need it!" The pot-bellied official was silent for a while, then shook his head doubtfully, "It's a pity you didn't think of a more difficult or trickier game — along the lines of ALIZIK. The audience might have enjoyed it and you'd have had a longer lease on life. Everyone would get a great big kick out of it if you could beat the record for delay before your execution, you know."

"Would they really?"

"Certainly. They sort of expect something special from an alien life form."

"They're getting it, aren't they?"

"Yes, I guess so," but disappointment and vague dissatisfaction showed in the official's face. "Oh, well. It's your life and your struggle to keep it a bit longer."

"I'll have only myself to blame when the end comes."

"True. Play will commence promptly at mid-day tomorrow. After that it's up to you." He lumbered away and his heavy footsteps died along the corridor.

A few minutes later the Warden appeared. "What did you pick?"

"MOMUS."

"Huh? What's that?"

"A Terran game," Carson said, as if that explained all.

"Oh, that's fine. Real fine." The Warden rubbed his hands together. "He approved it, of course?"

"Yes, he did."

"So you're all set to justify your continued existence. You'll have to take care to avoid a trap," he added in conspiratorial tones.

"What trap?" Carson asked worriedly.

"Your partner will play to win as quickly as possible. That is expected of him. But once he gets it into his head that he can't win, he'll start playing to lose. You've no way of telling when he'll change his tactics. Many a one has been caught flat-footed by the sudden switch and has found the game over before he has had time to realize what happened."

"But he must keep to the rules, musn't he?"

"Certainly. Neither of you will be allowed to ignore the rules."

"That suits me, I'm. . . ."

A high screech, like that of a bobcat backing into a cactus pierced the room from somewhere outside. It was followed by the scuffling and scraping of feet, a dull thud, then some dragging noises.

"What was that?" asked Carson.

"Legartine's game must have ended," the Warden guessed.

"Who's Legartine?"

"A public assassin." The Warden glanced at his watch, "He chose RAM-SID, a card game. It lasted a mere four hours. Serves him right. Good ridance to bad rubbish."

"And now they're giving him the big squeeze?"

"Of course!" Eying him, the Warden asked, "Nervous?"

Carson smiled, but without mirth.

CHAPTER FIVE

The performance did not commence in his cell as Carson had expected. A contest involving an alien life form, and an alien game, was far too important for that. They took him through the prison corridors to a large room with a table and three chairs in the center of it. Six more chairs made a line against one wall, each occupied by a pug-ugly, uniformed guard — complete with handgun and club. This was the muscle-squad, ready for action the moment the game came to an end.

At the other end of the room was a big, black cabinet with two rectangular lenses. From the box came a ticking sound and some muffled voices. This, presumably, was the television apparatus.

Taking a chair at the table, Carson gave the armed squad a frozen stare and sat down. A thin-faced individual, with the beady eyes of a rat, took the chair opposite. The pot-bellied official dumped himself in the remaining seat. Carson and Rat-eyes weighed each other up, the former with cold assurance, the later with sadistic speculation.

Upon the table stood a board. Three long wooden pegs arose from the board. The left-hand peg held a column of

sixty-four discs, evenly graduated in diminishing diameters; the largest at the bottom, the smallest at the top. The effect was that of a tapering tower. The other two pegs were empty.

Wasting no time, Pot-belly informed the viewers, "This is the Terran game of MOMUS. The column of discs must be transferred from the peg on which it now rests to either of the other two pegs. They must remain graduated in the same order when they have been transferred, the smallest at the top and the largest at the bottom. The player who completes the stack is the winner. Do you both understand?" he asked the competitors.

"Yes," said Carson.

Rat-eyes assented with a grunt.

"There are three rules," Pot-belly continued, "which will be strictly observed. You will make your moves alternately. You may move only one disc at a time. And last, you may not place a disc on any smaller than itself. Do you both understand?"

"Yes," Carson repeated.

Again Rat-eyes grunted.

From his pocket Pot-belly took a tiny white ball and carelessly tossed it on the table. It bounced a few times and then rolled off on Rat-eyes' side.

"You start," the official ordered.

Without hesitation Rat-eyes took the smallest disc from the top of the first peg and transferred it to the center peg.

"Bad move," said Carson without expression. He took the second disc and shifted it to the other peg.

Smirking for no obvious reason, Rat-eyes now removed the smallest disc from the center post and placed it on top of Carson's disc on the third peg. Carson promptly switched another disc

from the top of the column onto the now empty center post.

After an hour it became plain to Rat-eyes that the first peg was not there merely to hold the pile of discs. It had to be used. The smirk seemed to fade from his face and was soon replaced by mounting annoyance as the hours crawled by and the situation became increasingly complicated. By bed-time they were still at it, swapping discs like crazy. And neither seemed to have gotten very far. Rat-eyes now hated the sight of the first peg, especially when he was forced to put a disc back on it instead of taking one off. Pot-belly, still wearing his perpetual and meaningless smile, announced that play would cease until sunrise tomorrow.

The next day provided a long, arduous session, lasting from dawn to dusk and broken only by two meals. Both players worked hard and fast, setting a pace for each other, seeming to fight one another in an effort to reach a swift and conclusive end. No onlooker could find cause to complain about the slowness of the game. Four different times Rat-eyes tried to place a disc on top of a smaller one, and each time he was promptly called to order by the referee.

A third, fourth, fifth and sixth day went by. Rat-eyes now played with a mixture of dark suspicion and desperation while the column on the first peg appeared to go up as often as it went down. But Rat-eyes was no fool and he knew quite well they were making progress. But it was progress at an appalling rate. What's more, it became worse as time went on. Finally he could see no way of losing the game, much less winning it.

By the fourteenth day Rat-eyes had reduced himself to an automaton, wearily moving discs to and fro in the soulless, disinterested manner of one compelled to perform a horrible chore. Carson remained as impassive as a Buddha, and that fact did little to please Rat-eyes either.

Danger reared its head on the sixteenth day, though Carson did not know about it. The moment he entered the room he sensed an atmosphere of heightened interest and excitement. Rat-eyes looked extra glum. Pot-belly had taken on an air of added importance. Even the stolid, dull-witted guards displayed signs of mental animation. Four off-duty Wardens joined the audience. There was more activity than usual in the video cabinet.

Ignoring all this, Carson began to play. This endless moving of discs was a lousy way of spending one's life, he reasoned with himself, but the stranger's post was a lousy way to end it, too. He had every reason to carry on.

In mid-afternoon Rat-eyes suddenly left the table, went to the wall and kicked it good and hard, shouted a remark about the amazing resemblance of Terrans to animal offal, and then returned to his seat for the next move. There was some stirring in the video cabinet. Pot-belly mildly reproved Rat-eyes for taking time off to advertise his patriotism. Rat-eyes played on with the sullen air of a delinquent who's mother has forgotten to kiss him.

Late in the evening Pot-belly stopped the game and, facing the TV cameras, said, "Play will resume tomorrow — the seventeenth day!" He voiced it as though it meant something or other.

CHAPTER SIX

When the Warden shoved his breakfast through the grille in the morning, Carson asked, "Late, aren't you?"

"They say you won't be wanted until some time this afternoon."

"That so? What's going on?"

"You broke the record yesterday," informed the other with open admiration, "Nobody has ever lasted to the seventeenth day before."

"So they're going to give me the morning off to celebrate, eh?"

"I've no idea why there is a delay. I've never known them to interrupt a game before," answered the Warden, and he seemed to be genuinely puzzled.

"Do you think they'll stop it altogether?" Carson asked, feeling a constriction in his throat. "Do you think they'll officially declare it finished?"

"Oh, no! They wouldn't do that!" The Warden looked horrified at the thought of it. "We mustn't bring the curse of the dead upon us. It's absolutely essential that condemned persons be made to set their own time of execution."

"Why is it?" Carson inquired curiously.

"Because it always has been, since the start of time."

The Warden wandered off to deliver other breakfasts, leaving Carson to

ponder the explanation. "*Because it always has been.*" It wasn't a bad reason. Indeed, some would consider it a very good reason. He could think of several rather pointless things done on Terra that were done simply because they had always been done. In this matter of unchanging habit, the Gombarians were very like his own people.

Though somewhat soothed by the Warden's remarks, Carson couldn't help feeling more and more uneasy as the morning wore on without anything happening. After sixteen days of moving discs from peg to peg, it got so that he was doing it in his sleep. It just didn't seem right that he should be enjoying a day of aimless loafing around his cell. The game should be going on, and besides, there was something ominous about this waiting.

Again and again he found himself nursing a strong suspicion that the officials were looking for a way to end play without appearing to flout convention. When they found the way—if they found it—they would pull a fast one on him, declare the game ended, take him away and fix him up with a very tight necktie.

Carson was still thinking these pessimistic thoughts when the call came in the afternoon. They hustled him along to the same room as before and play was resumed as if it had never ended. It lasted a mere thirty minutes. Someone tapped twice from inside the video cabinet and Pot-belly responded by calling a halt to the game. Carson was taken back to his cell, completely baffled by this new schedule.

Late in the evening he was called out again. He went with bad grace because these short, sudden performances were more trying than the day-

long sessions. You couldn't accomplish anything in half an hour. And besides, where he had previously known that he was being taken to play the game with Rat-eyes, now he could never be sure that he was not about to become the "lead character" in a literally breathless scene.

On entering the room he realized at once that things were going to be different this time. The board, with its pegs and discs, still stood in the middle of the table. But Rat-eyes was absent and so were the armed guards. Three people awaited him: Pot-belly, Palamin and a short, squat, heavily built man.

Pot-belly was wearing the offended frown of someone burdened with a load of stock in a non-existent oil-well. Palamin looked displeased and showed it by snorting like an impatient horse. The third man appeared to be contemplating a phenomenon on the other side of the galaxy.

"Sit down!" ordered Palamin, spitting the sounds out.

Carson sat.

"Now, Marinkot, you tell him."

The squat one showed a belated awareness of being on Gombar, then said slowly to Carson, "I rarely watch television. It's suitable only for the masses with nothing better to do and who have no wish to think."

"Get to the point," urged Palamin, a habitual TV viewer.

"But having heard that you were about to break the age-old record," continued Marinkot, undisturbed, "I watched the programme yesterday." He made a short gesture indicating that he could identify a foul smell at first sniff. "It was immediately apparent that to finish your game a minimum

number of moves would be in the order of two to the sixty-fourth power, minus one." He took a momentary flight into dreamland, came back and added mildly, "That's a very large number."

"Large!" exclaimed Palamin, letting out a snort that rocked the pegs.

"Let us suppose," pursued Marinkot, "that you were to transfer these discs as fast as you could go, morning, noon and night, without pausing for meals or sleep; do you know how long it would take you to complete the game?"

"Nearly sixty billion Terran centuries," said Carson, as if talking about a week from next Thursday.

"I have no knowledge of Terran time units, but I can tell you that neither you nor a thousand generations of your successors could live long enough to complete the game. Correct?"

"Correct," Carson admitted.

"Yet you say this is a Terran game?"

"I do."

Marinkot spread his hands helplessly to show that as far as he was concerned, there was nothing more to say.

Wearing a forbidding scowl, Palamin now took over. "A game cannot be defined as genuine unless it is actually played. Do you claim that this so-called game is actually played on Terra?"

"Yes."

"By whom?"

"By priests in the Temple of Lym."

"And how long have they been playing it?" pursued Palamin.

"About eighty thousand years."

"Generation after generation?"

"That's right."

"I don't believe it! You mean each player contributes to the end of his days without any hope of seeing the result?"

"Yes."

Palamin fumed a bit, then asked, "Why do they play it?"

"It's part of their religious faith. They believe that the moment the last disc is placed, the Universe will come to an end."

"Are they crazy?"

"No more so than people who have believed in other things and shown their faith for equally as long and to as little purpose."

"A belief is infinite — a game must have a conclusion," Palamin observed ominously.

"This game is not endless. It has a conclusive finish." Carson appealed to Marinkot as the undisputed authority, "Hasn't it?"

"It is definitely finite," he pronounced, unable to deny the fact.

"Sol!" exclaimed Palamin, "You think you are clever, don't you?"

"I get by," Carson admitted modestly.

"But we are cleverer," said Palamin, using his nastiest snorts as punctuation. "You have tricked us—and now we will trick you. The game is finite. It can be completed. Therefore, it shall be continued until either you or the game reach a natural end. You, Cliff Carson, will go on playing it, days, weeks, months, years, until eventually you expire of old age—or frustration." He smiled and went on, "There will be times when the sight of these discs will produce nausea, there will be times when the very thought of them will drive you out of your mind. You will beg for a merciful death. But you will not be granted that favour—you will continue to play." He waved a hand in triumphant dismissal, "Take him away!"

Carson was returned to his cell. When supper arrived the Warden offered him some information. "I am told that play will go on regularly from tomorrow morning. I don't understand why they messed it up today."

"They've decided that I'm to suffer a fate worse than death."

The Warden stared at him questioningly.

"I've been naughty," explained Carson.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Rat-eyes had evidently been advised of the new set-up because he donned an armour of philosophical acceptance and played steadily but without interest. All the same, the long sessions of repetitive movements ate corrosively at the armour and gradually found its way through.

At first it was just little evidences of the hate he felt for Carson that showed. But as the game went on, progress became slower and slower. Where the fourteenth disc had been moved in a matter of hours, the seventeenth took days. Rat-eyes and Carson glared across the table at each other with the venomous hatred of men who blame each other for the predicament they find themselves in.

In the early afternoon of the fifty-second day Rat-eyes found they were faced with the prospect of returning

nearly all the discs back to the first peg, one by one. It was too much for him. He jumped up from the table, circled it several times bleating like a sheep, then charged straight for the wall, head lowered like a ram. Pot-belly with a crink in his neck from watching Rat-eyes, gave a sign to the guards and they led the still bleating Rat-eyes away.

Carson was elated. He had won a victory over the hated enemy. Day by day he had seen Rat-eyes coming apart and he had pressed the game at a faster pace. He had pressed Rat-eyes right out of the game. And he had enjoyed the victory. He had a new reason for playing, now.

Carson sat there trying to suppress his elation. But suddenly his joy was turned to alarm. What would happen now? If Rat-eyes was unable to continue—as it looked—it could be argued that the game was over. And if it was over. . . .

It could be said with equal truth that an unfinished game remains unfinished, even though one of the players is in a mental home giving his hair a molasses shampoo. If the authorities took the former view, his only defence was to assert the latter. But his chief hope lay in the fact that the Gombarians were unwilling to outrage ancient custom. And custom dictated that he must set the time for his death. Millions of viewers would take a dim view of it if their leaders mauled a pet superstition. Yes sir, these silly beliefs and customs had their place.

Carson need not have worried. Having decided that to keep the game going would be refined hell, Palamin had ordered a roster of relief players to be prepared, drawn from the ranks of

minor offenders who's ambitions had never risen high enough to earn a strangling.

After a short time another opponent appeared, also a shifty looking character but with rather dull eyes this time. He had jowls that drooped like hanging dewlaps and resembled an especially dopey hound-dog. He appeared barely capable of spelling his own name and Carson reasoned that it must have taken at least a month to teach him that he should move only one disc at a time and never, never, never place a larger one on a smaller one. But somehow he had learned and the game went on.

As play progressed Carson was disappointed to learn that appearances were not deceiving. Dopey was just as stupid as he looked and after several hours of playing it became evident that he wouldn't last more than a week. He played slowly and doggedly, as if to make a mistake meant terrible punishment. For reasons best known to Dopey, he detested having his face televised all over the country and near the end of the seventh day he'd had enough. Without warning, he left his seat, faced the camera and made a number of swift gestures at the lense. The peculiar signs meant nothing to Carson—but Pot-belly almost fell off his chair. The guards sprang forward, grabbed Dopey and frog-marched him through the door.

As Carson anxiously awaited the next challenger he savoured the enjoyment of his short, unfair but decisively satisfying victory over Dopey. He could hardly keep from looking at the door as he waited.

The newcomer was a huge creature. A giant who dumped himself into the

chair and glanced at Carson. Then he wriggled his hairy ears. Carson, who had always regarded this feat as one of his own accomplishments, promptly wriggled his own ears back. The other looked fit to burst a blood vessel.

"This Terran sneak!" he roared at Pot-belly, "He's throwing dirt at me—I won't put up with that!"

LOOKING

See that happy moron;
He doesn't give a damn.
I wish I were a moron —
My God, perhaps I am!

— *The Atlantic*

"You will cease to throw dirt," ordered the official.

"I only wriggled my ears," the perplexed Carson defended.

"That's the same as throwing dirt," Pot-belly said. "You will refrain from doing it and concentrate on the game."

Carson's chagrin dissipated into a wry smile as he contemplated the pleasure of reducing this big-eared giant to the mental level of a vegetable.

And so it went, on and on, day after day, while a steady parade of opponents arrived and departed. Around the two-hundredth day, Pot-Belly himself began to pull his chair apart with the apparent intention of building a camp-fire in the middle of the floor. The guards led him out. A new referee appeared. He had an even bigger paunch and Carson promptly labelled him Pot-belly No. 2

Play resumed.

CHAPTER EIGHT

"I HAVE CEASED TO LOOK FORWARD. THE DAYS OF LOOKING FORWARD USED TO PASS SLOWLY AND HEAVILY BECAUSE THEY HAD MERELEY TO BE LIVED THROUGH, FOR THE SAKE OF OTHERS TO COME, BUT NOW THE DAYS ARE ALL LIVED FOR THEIR OWN SAKE."

Unlike his Gombarian opponents, who found the game soul-deadening, Carson was deriving great satisfaction and pleasure from the contest. To him it was no longer a contest involving the moving of discs from peg to peg, it was a contest of wills. The personal conflict between his adversary and himself was what counted. He had won—and he enjoyed the taste of victory. Still, he couldn't help feeling that the Gombarians were an inferior race and he wondered how he would have fared against other Terrans.

The days were no longer a problem, but the nights were slow and painful. Sleep was rare for Carson and often he would be rudely awakened by an uproar in the middle of the night. He had asked the Warden about these fracasces in the middle of the night and had been told, in an off-hand manner, that so-and-so had resisted and had to be beaten into submission.

After one particularly violent ruckus, the Warden had stopped by Carson's

cell and offered, "Yorka refused to go. They had to clobber him a little."

"You mean his game had ended?" Carson asked, wondering if this had been the Late, Late Show.

"Yes, the stupid fool matched the five of Anchors with the five of Stars," the Warden sighed. "When he realized what he'd done he tried to kill his opponent." He wagged his head in reproof. "Such behaviour never does them any good. They go to the post cut and bruised and if the guards are angry, they ask the strangler to twist slowly."

Carson didn't like to think about it. "Surprises me that they haven't chosen my game. Eeveryone must know of it by now.

"They are not permitted to. There is now a law that only a recognized Gombarian game may be selected. In fact, your Terran game has been outlawed for Gombarians and anyone found playing it—in any of its variations—meets the strangler. Our authorities will not tolerate even the mention of this game."

"Why not?" asked the curious Carson.

"Remember Marinkot, the visitor you had the day after you broke the record?"

"Yes."

"It was on his personal order as head of Central Intelligence and Planning."

"But why?" insisted Carson.

"No one questions an order from C.I.P., least of all a Warden," he finished, and then ambled away, leaving the prisoner little wiser.

Carson lay out on the bench and hoped for a silent, undisturbed night. What was the earth date? How long

had he been here? The Gombarian days were almost certainly of a different length than Terran days and he had no way of computing time. More important, how long would he remain on Gombar?

Often, in the period before he went off to sleep, he would think up wild plans for escape. But none of them were of any use at all. No doubt he could break out of the prison. That was only a matter of waiting for the right opportunity and he had been here so long that he knew the prison routine by rote. And the guards were accustomed to him now and less suspicious. But what about after he was outside the prison?

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Any place on this planet he would be as conspicuous as a Kangaroo on the sidewalks of London. If it were possible to look anything like a Gombarian, he might stand a slight chance. But it wasn't possible. He could do nothing except play for time.

This he continued to do. On and on, pausing only for meals and sleep. By the four-hundredth day he was under the impression that he had been playing for five years at least and that he was doomed to play forever.

The four-hundred and twenty second day was no different than any other except in one respect. Although he was unaware of it, this was to be Carson's last day.

CHAPTER NINE

At the dawn of day four-twenty-two, no call came for Carson to play. Without choice he waited a few hours and still no summons to the games room. Maybe they had decided to break him with cat-an-mouse tactics, calling him when he didn't expect it and not calling him when he did. A sort of psychological water torture and, he had to admit, one that might prove effective.

When the Warden passed through the prison corridor shortly before the noon meal was due, Carson questioned him. The fellow knew nothing and was as puzzled as Carson himself.

The mid-day meal arrived. The prisoner had just finished it when the squad of goons arrived, accompanied by an officer. They entered his cell and removed his irons. Holy-hell, this was something! Carson stretched his limbs and started firing questions at the officer and his pug-uglies. They took no notice of his questions, but they no longer treated him as if he had stolen the green eyes out of their little yellow god. They allowed him to march out of his cell between them, along the corridor and past the games room.

Finally they passed through a large doorway and into an open yard. In the middle of this area stood six steel posts, each with a hole near the top. The strangling posts! Steadily the

squad marched straight toward the posts. Carson's stomach knotted and began to turn over. Every nerve had suddenly become numb. This was it! The game was over!

Well, if they had decided to finish him off they weren't going to do it without a battle. His muscles tensed, ready for their last, futile effort—then it was over. They had marched right past the posts and he was being escorted to a large gate in one wall of the yard. His stomach turned back and thankfully settled itself.

Outside the gates waited a long, sleek, wheeled vehicle of some sort, obviously VIP transportation. The rear door opened and Carson was motioned to enter. On the rear seat sat a frowning Palamin and a smiling Marinkot.

"Ah, good day, Carson," Marinkot opened the conversation, "I see you don't look any the worse for your ordeal. It's over now, you know."

Carson didn't believe what he'd heard. He couldn't speak; he could only stare at Marinkot.

"It's over, really," Marinkot assured him. "I believe Palamin here has a few words to say haven't you," he added and nudged Palamin meaningfully.

The other gave a startled grunt and began, "Oh, yes. We, uh. . . seem to have made a mistake. Fortunately," and here he winced, "not one that can't be rectified. You see, Carson, we couldn't believe you when you said that your government wasn't an aggressor. I do hope you can forgive us, but it was entirely foreign to our way of thinking. . . that is. . . we, uh. . ."

"They made a stupid mistake," fin-

ished Marinkot. "I should have put better men on the job in the first place and then all this wouldn't have happened to you."

Carson sat between them still completely bewildered and not sure whether he was hearing right or whether he had lost to one of his opponents in the games room. "What is all this about?" he asked fearfully.

"Oh," put in the head of Intelligence, "we made contact with another Terran vessel yesterday. They sent envoys to inform us that they were hovering near Gombar and that they wished to negotiate for your release. We didn't trust them at first, but after they had demonstrated one of their weapons—a radiation ray of some sort, quite impressive, eh Palamin?" he digressed. "Well, anyway, we decided that we'd beter talk things over and your friends agreed that if you hadn't been harmed, they would just take you with them and call the whole thing quits. Very reasonable terms, it seems to us, and we're happy to find that Terrans are as peace-loving as you informed us earlier."

"You mean that I'm going back to Terra"? It was hard for Carson to grasp the reality of it.

"Yes," grunted Palamin, "you are."

"No need to take it badly, Palamin," broke in the other Gombarian official, "Everyone makes mistakes."

As the vehicle neared the center of town the streets were lined with cheering flag-waving Gombarians. Carson was well known because of his television performances and the Gombarians were turning out in force to see him off. The change was too much for Carson. He couldn't even think;

he could only gape back at the waving crowds.

"They're going to miss you," said Marinkot, but no one answered.

The vehicle passed through the city and out into open country.

Minutes later they pulled off the highway and into what appeared to be a military airfield of some sort. And there, in all its majesty and glory, was a Terran space battleship. Nothing ever looked better to Carson. It really was over.

They pulled right up to the space ship and got out of the car. Carson wanted to run for the open hatch, but he couldn't move. As he stood staring, a small, thin, dark-haired man came out of the ship and walked toward him, smiling and holding out his hand.

"I'm Captain Sears," he said, "Glad you were able to make the trip back with us."

Carson grabbed his hand and wrung it enthusiastically. The Terran sounds were as welcome as the sight of the ship had been. Silently, he moved toward the hatch with Captain Sears. Marinkot followed a step behind and Palamin brought up the rear.

As he got in, Marinkot spoke up again. "Well, Carson, we haven't treated you too badly, I hope. You'll not be too harsh on us in your report? Of course you won't, you are an intelligent person and realize our position," he fairly fawned. Palamin hung back and fumed. They seemed to want to prolong the parting, seemed to be waiting for something. Carson looked around and just then a small, speedy, wheel-less vehicle slid onto the runway and sped toward the ship.

"Look out," yelled Carson, but he

yelled in Gombarian and the Captain just stared.

"No need to worry, Carson," soothed Marinkot, "Just a little memento for you to take with you. We have no more need for it." And then he despatched Palamin to the arriving vehicle with a wave.

Palamin ambled over to the stopping ground car and was handed a large box by one of its occupants. He returned to the Terran spaceship and pushed the box roughly into Carson's arms. Carson opened the box and peered inside; a grin of delight crossing his face.

He looked up at Palamin, wriggled his ears and said, "Thanks! I was wondering what was going to happen to this."

Palamin didn't hear the words, he only saw the ears. Unable to control his chagrin he reached for the Terran but Marinkot stepped between them.

"Now, Palamin, relax. Carson's just working off a little steam and I'm sure he means no real harm. Let's look to the future."

Turning to his men, Marinkot gave the order to clear the area. He saluted the two Terrans and returned to his car with Palamin at heel. As Captain Sears dogged the hatch shut the vehicle sped off.

A young lieutenant showed Carson to his blast-off station and as he strapped him into his couch he explained, "The Dunlop couldn't make it with that trouble near Cygnus. . . got here as soon as we could." The officer eyed him sympathetically, "We'll have you settled in as soon as we get our course set for Terra and then we'll

get you some food."

Once on course, and after attaining maximum velocity, the routine life of a spaceship resumed. Carson was summoned to the wardroom and was pleased to see Captain Sears seated at a table alone.

"I'll have to enter all the facts in my report, you know," he began, "and I'd appreciate it if you could tell me as much of your story as you can remember."

Carson repeated in detail all the events leading up to his capture, he told of the questioning by the Gombarian council and the sentence of death. He explained the Gombarian method of execution and the peculiar custom that allowed a condemned person one last game.

"What did you choose to play?" the Captain injected.

"MOMUS."

"What's that?"

"Wait here and I'll show you," Carson grinned as he got up from the table. In a few minutes he returned carrying the large box Palamin had handed him just before they left Gombar. He opened it and placed the board with the three pegs and sixty-four discs on the table. Everything was as he had left it in the games room. More than a year's progress was represented by the position of the discs.

As Carson proceeded to demonstrate the game to the Captain, explaining the logic of the moves as he went, several officers who had entered the wardroom gathered around. As play progressed they were amazed at the intricacies of what appeared to be a simple game. When the Captain understood the game, they played for several hours. When the call came for dinner, he and Carson

left the table.

"Damned interesting game when you understand it, Carson," the Captain was heard to say as they left the room.

The officers looked at each other for a moment and then two of them sat down to try the game themselves.

"It would be a good way to keep the kids out of trouble in the daytime, eh?" one remarked.

Play went on. A new diversion had been introduced into the tedious spaceship routine.

CHAPTER TEN

Meanwhile, back at the Gombarian Council Chamber, Palamin was leading a group in a harangue against Marinkot..

"We had their ship on the ground. We could have captured it—or at least destroyed it. But no, we have to listen to you and now they're beyond the reach of our airships. They'll be back to invade us, mark my words!"

Around the table various Gombarians grunted their agreement. Eckster and Borkor looked at Marinkot as if he were the stupidest Gombarian alive—and they would like to correct that immediately.

A communications device buzzed and an attendant brought the instrument to Marinkot. He listened for a moment, thanked the person on the other end of the line for the information and

then signed off. Turning to the council he spoke, "That was the military. The Terran ship was moving at an incredible speed when they lost it on their scanner. Faster than light!"

Stunned silence greeted this remark. The council believed him, but they didn't want to admit it.

"It must be obvious, even to you *elected* people, that the Terran technology is far ahead of ours. We could not possibly win a war against them and, unless something interferes with their progress, we cannot ever catch

up with their science. So we have gambled. We have taken a chance that something will interfere with their plans. But we have rigged the wheel of fortune so that the odds are in our favour. We will have to wait and none of us here today will know who is right.

"However, you will be spared the ignominy of explaining the error to the populace at the next election. And I will be spared the possibility of being made the scapegoat. Only history will provide the evidence as to the right or wrong of our decision."



EPILOGUE...

Excerpts from Official Gombarian Documents in the Inter-Galactic Museum:

Reference

Date Capsule #37569-D
diary of Commander-in-Chief,
Stellar Unit 2

. . .no resistance offered by inhabitants. Although prepared for fulfillment of Marinkot's plan by previous invasions of Terran held planets, appalled at decay of what was obviously a high intelligence. . .evidence that Terran civilization vastly superior to our own. . .everywhere decline seems to have been rapid. . .inhabitants seem incapable of constructive thought. . .reproducing at prolific rate . . .food scarce, near starvation. . .as long as they are allowed to keep their MOMUS games, the Terrans will go where they are told, do what they are told. . .

. . .intensive studies by Socio-Psychiatric teams prove Terrans unfit for any purpose.

Recommendation: GENOCIDE

Reference

Date Capsule #37570-D
Observatory Report, Planet Cygnus. . .

. . .night just past routine and no major Galactic Phenomenon observed. Report very faint nova appearing briefly in sector P-12, vicinity Terran system. . .probable cause: disintegration of minor planet.

A VARIATION OF MOMUS

Realizing that most readers — even *The Diamond's* inside readers — do not have the time to sit down and play MOMUS Jim Cox devised a simple version that can be tried by anyone possessing a deck of cards.

Take ten cards of one suit, say the ace to the ten, and place them in order the ace on top and the ten on the bottom. Place this stack of cards on a table in front of you. Imagining that you have space for two more piles of cards, you may begin play.

Let us suppose, for instance, that the cards numbered Ace to Ten are on your left and we refer to them as pile No. 1. Pile No. 2, then, is in the center and pile No. 3 to your right. Remove the Ace and place it in pile No. 2. The next move is to remove the deuce and place it on No. 3. The Ace is then moved from No. 2 to No. 3 and the three card is moved to No. 2 pile. The idea is to get all ten cards into either of the two piles (No. 2 or No. 3) in the same order, with the Ace on top and the Ten on the bottom and all the rest in consecutive order.

The rules are simple: move only ONE card at a time and never, never place a larger number on a smaller one.

This version of MOMUS can be completed in 18 minutes. For those who find this too quick, the thirteen cards may be used: that will take about 150 minutes, provided, of course, that you do not make a mistake.

The *Diamond* staff and certain selected victims have been playing this version as a form of research on Cox's story. It does get hold of you and we feel it is better than solitaire.

The sixty-four disc version, by the way, requires 18, 446, 744, 073, 709 551, 615, moves to complete. At the rate of one move per second, night and day with no breaks, it would take about 58,000,000,000 years !

Choral Group presents a

MUSICALE

with

**Special performance by
HOTEL DIEU CHOIR**

The Collin's Bay Choristers presented a special Christmas show for a special audience on Thursday, December 22nd.



After Mr. Smith had concluded, the M.C. started the show rolling again by introducing the next selection, O Holy Night, featuring Joe Smith in a solo. Following this a quartet composed of Walter Hughes, Allan Thompson, Frank Cucan and Richard Green sang Angels We Have Heard On High, with the Choristers backing them. A traditional carol, Adeste Fideles, was next on the programme and young Téd Smith had the solo in this selection.

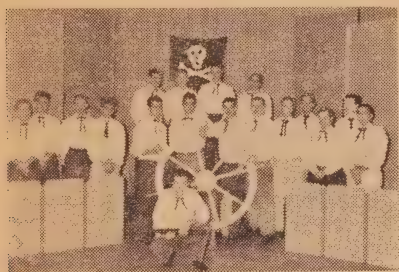
Nicholas Moschitto stepped front and center to sing Jesus of Nazareth for the audience and then the choir concluded the first portion of the programme with Jesu Bambino (Richard Green solo) and Night of Nights. This last was the choir's piece de resistance and featured the strong bass voice of Jack Reveille with Lewis Licastro on the tenor solo.

The second portion of our programme was turned over to 16 girls from the Hotel Dieu Nurses' Choir singing Silent Night, Jesus Your King Is Born, a Canadian Carol, and the beautiful Ave Maria. They were led by Mr. Peter Nourry, who also played the organ for our Choristers. This was the first time outside entertainers had helped out in an inmate show and it certainly added to the evening's entertainment. The Hotel Dieu Choir are very popular and much in demand in Kingston, sing-

In the audience were the wives and sweethearts, parents, brothers and sisters of the men in the choral group. With the permission of the officials, they had been invited by the men and you may be sure they provided an incentive for the group to sing well. Officers and their families made up the bulk of the 250-odd guests that turned out on a snowy, blizzardy night to see how far our choral group had come in the eleven months since it had been founded. All agreed that the group had come a long way indeed.

After opening the programme with Christus Vincit, the choir gave way to Mr. Fred Smith, the Acting Warden, who said a few words of welcome and gave a little background on the group who would sing that night.

ing for the local radio and TV stations as well as for other amateur programmes, and we would like to express our appreciation to Sister Mooney and all the girls in the choir for filling our auditorium with new and joyous sounds.

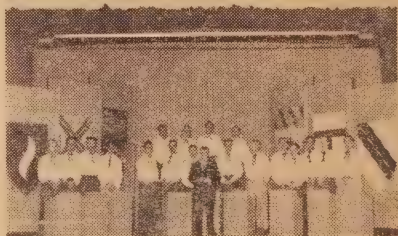


After a twenty minute intermission, the Choristers returned to the stage for the final segment of the show — a special musical presentation of selections from their repertoire. As the curtain went up, the scene was set for Candish's Song of the Jolly Roger. The Choristers were dressed as pirates and a ship's steering wheel and nautical setting surrounded the stage. Ray Delaney was by far the most realistic pirate of the group, decked out in boots, scarves and whites. A hairy chest did not detract from the general impression either. The skull and crossbones was hoisted at the appropriate time, of course.

Following this, the M.C. brought the choir's leader, Roger Paquin, on stage and introduced him to the audience. Roger was asked how the choir was progressing in the CBC's Festival of Choirs and he told the house that they had been chosen for the finals by the three judges. Two of the judges scored the

choir in the 70's, but a third judge gave them only 51%, dragging their scoring average down to 65%.

Roger was then asked if the Choristers could sing Finlandia as a special favour to the Diamond's foreign correspondent, Lex Schrag, who, though invited by The Diamond, was working for the Globe & Mail that night. The Choristers did an excellent job on Finlandia and followed with the Closing Prayer from The Last Seven Words of Christ.



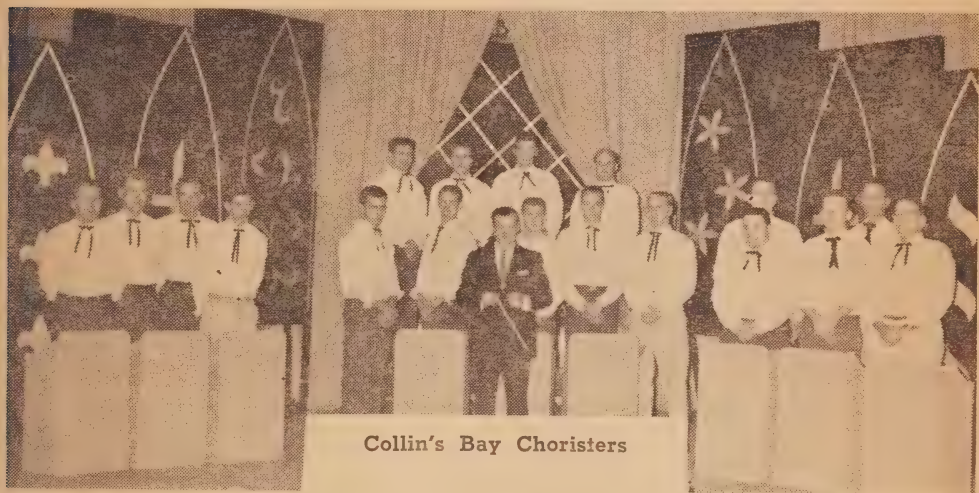
If there was an individual star in this show, it was certainly the next vocalist. Lewis Licastro sang I Believe with as much feeling and emotion as any Lanza or Hibbler and the audience refused to let him off the stage without a curtain call. An excellent performance and thoroughly enjoyed by both the cast and the people in front of the footlights.

When the audience would permit the show to continue, the Choristers sang The Battle Hymn of the Republic and their fine work, coupled with some excellent lighting effects, made this another favourite with the audience. Applause again was loud and long.

In an un-announced, but nevertheless scheduled part of the programme, the M.C. then asked three of the girls from

Hotel Dieu if they would come on stage and help lead the audience in a sing-along. Sylvia Kerr, Beverly White and Patricia Yeats assented and then, to encourage the ladies in the audience, three men were chosen from our choir to help out also. To the great relief of the M.C., the audience came through and sang well starting with Jingle Bells,

Windsor with their 3-month old son, was particularly pleased with this type of visit and the presence of this young couple and their baby made everyone in the room feel better. This was as close as any inmate can come to Christmas with his family and the officials are to be thanked for helping to make this a Merry Christmas for the men who took part in this show.



Collin's Bay Choristers

then a verse and chorus of Noel and finishing on a more sentimental note with White Christmas.

A few words of thanks by the M.C. at this point, an admonition for the audience to drive carefully, and the show closed with the Choristers singing I'll Walk With God.

The cast and their relatives were served coffee and sandwiches in the Staff dining room after the show. This was the first time this privilege had been extended to the men and coming at the Christmas season it was particularly welcome. One young inmate, whose wife had come all the way from

Working backstage for this performance were Ron Sears, Stage Director; Bob Fowler on lights; Frank Brewer, radio technician and Jim Cox as Director and co-ordinator of the entire show. Stage hands were D. McCafferty, Frank Keough, Frank Costello and Gordon Quinney. All did an excellent job and this was the first show here at the Bay that was set in eye-appealing scenery. Lighting effects were different, too, thanks to Queen's University. We managed to borrow four powerstats from them. Mr. Fred Bendell, of the local Odeon Theatre, loaned us a spotlight, again. We are always borrowing from Mr. Bendell.

TRAVEL

**"--- from Toronto to Vancouver Island and back again
"- - the R.C.M.P. appears to be operating efficiently in --"**

Many of The Diamond's constant readers have shown a keen interest in travel. A typical expression of their viewpoint was volunteered by J. Frothingbeer Heist (7117): "Man, I'm froze! If I could make it over the the wall, I'd be on my way to sunny Mexico!"

Ever eager to serve their (captive) audience, the magazine's editorial staff offered to sally forth, individually or collectively, and gather the material for a definitive article on the subject. This offer was regretfully declined by the Collin's Bay management.

The magazine's funds, it was explained, were insufficient to finance the operation. Although the staff members urged their willingness to accept some degree of hardship and privation, they were gently advised: "The Diamond musn't appear cheap. It wouldn't do, at all to have you chaps sleeping in culverts or shacking up in barns."

Disappointed but determined, the editor sought an alternative means of getting a travel story. Somewhat dubiously, he gave the assignment to his Toronto correspondent, Lex Schrag, alias the churl of Mortgage Manor,

a pulpy slob who does an occasional bit of writing for The Globe and Mail. This arrangement proved eminently unsatisfactory.

Mr. Schrag refused to visit any of the Latin American countries and obtain useful information on extradition, police organizations and business opportunities. If he had to pay his own expenses, he insisted, he'd have to stay in Canada.

He travelled 6,418 miles by car (his own) from Toronto to Vancouver Island and back again in late summer. He was accompanied by the woman with whom he has been living (they are married) and an alleged dog, described as a hairy, Kerry Blue terrier. This cost him \$463 for travelling expenses and \$86, on his return, for repairs to the car.

The only valuable details of his journey, which took 17 days, were derived by deduction. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police appear to be operating efficiently and in strength through the prairie provinces, since the motorists of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta carefully observe the speed limits.

wishing to pass quickly through British Columbia would be well advised to avoid the province entirely. The Trans-Canada route from Vancouver to Banff is not yet completed, and the 190-mile section known as The Bend, between Revelstoke and Golden, can only be traversed at 35 miles per hour. This area of broken pavement and rough gravel will not be eliminated until September of this year, or later.

On the southerly route, along No. 3 Highway through the Crowsnest Pass, average speed of 25 miles per hour must be observed through the Cascades, a 5,600-foot range of mountains. From the correspondent's description, it seems likely he left the right of way and drove up ungraded portions of the mountainside.

In any case, the report suggested that British Columbia is not an area in which a motorist could avoid embarrassment by leaving a specific locality at high speed with any certainty of arriving somewhere else. He would be much more likely to drive off a cliff, or into a lake or a bear.

Most of Mr. Schrag's account of his journey dealt with such trivia as the cost of motels (ranging from \$5 to \$9 per night in the off season) and food (meals cost from \$1 to \$3 per copy). He mentioned the inordinate pride of his wife's dog after a visit to Cathedral Grove on Vancouver Island, and added that the beast had tried to take over the driving on the way home through

Winnipeg. Examination of this latter item showed it to be an exaggeration; the dog had merely climbed under the driver's legs and made access to the pedals somewhat difficult.

The only animation discernable in the article was to be found in descriptions of food. The correspondent indulged himself in peaches as large as baseballs in the Okanagan Valley oysters and prawns on Vancouver Island, and smoked spareribs in Northern Minnesota. He made a few trite and colorless remarks about the scenery ("a lake clear as gin and tonic" and "a mesa like a mound of French chocolate ice cream"), but had evidently avoided the more important attractions along the route. He made no mention of such historic spots as Oakalla and Stoney Mountain.

After lengthy consideration, The Diamond's editor reluctantly decided he would be able to furnish his readers with any useful information about travel in this issue. His correspondent had failed to appreciate the responsibilities of his assignment; his story was completely unsuitable for publication, and was assigned to the waste basket.

The Diamond, in fact, would be pleased to dispense with its present Toronto correspondent, if it could enlist another one in the same part of Ontario who would serve for the same remuneration — or, better still, pay for the privilege.

Mr. MacLeod, Chief Steward, and all the men who worked in the kitchen on Christmas day are deserving of recognition for the excellent dinner they served. Half a chicken, cooked like mother does it at home, was the main course. Dinner was enjoyed by all the men and it certainly helped to make this Christmas the merriest.

The Jovial Jester



WACKY WIT



When Bill rolled in plastered for the third night in a row, his wife dragged him to the window and pointed out over the city. In the distance they could see the blazing lights of a big distillery.

"See how big it is?" she said. "They can always make it faster than you can drink it."

"Mebbe so," slurred the husband, "but at least I go 'em workin' nights."



One con told his cellmate that a very nice thing had hapened in the last prison he was in. The Warden's daughter had just married one of the inmates — a lifer.

The Warden was a little upset about it, though — because they had eloped.



Warning his teenage son about the evils of drink, a father cautioned: "Remember, the man who drinks like a fish is easily hooked."

The trouble with women in business, said a prominent businessman, is if you treat 'em like men, they cry; and if you treat 'em like women, darned if they don't get the best of you."



A small, red M.G. is stuck by the side of the road in a snowbank. The driver is digging it out when another car pulls up and the driver, leaning out of the window, asks: "Car stuck, eh?"

"No," answered the M.G. owner. "My engine just died and I'm digging a hole to bury it in!" #5459



"A bride wears white," said the speaker, "as a symbol of happiness, for her wedding day is the most joyful day of her life."

"And why," injected a heckler, "do men wear black?"

Wardens' Conference Initiates

The

FIRST STEPS

Our last issue carried a hopeful report on the policies of the new Commissioner of Penitentiaries, Mr. Allan J. MacLeod. Our hope was not misplaced. The beginnings of the new deal are to be seen and some of the changes that have already been made ranked high on The Diamond's list.



general, and the inmates are very appreciative of this change. One bottleneck at the present time is that not enough visitors are taking advantage of the Sunday visiting now allowed. Only statutory holidays are "no-visit" days and it would be of help to the censoring staff if more persons would utilize the new privilege of visiting on Sundays.



VISITS have been made much more compatible with the removal of the old wooden table, which separated the visitors by four feet and a barrier, and the installation of a dozen card tables. Visitors and inmates now sit around these tables and talk and, of course, there is some physical contact — a kiss between husband and wife, son and mother; or a handshake between friends. There are now two visits allowed each month of one-half hour's duration each. The censor may, if facilities permit, allow extra time on a visit. Mr. Reid, our head censor, is quite pleased with the way the inmates are co-operating with this new arrangement and has reported that only one man tried to smuggle anything in. The officials are pleased, in

LETTERS are now available to the inmate at the rate of one per week free (up from four per month) and he may purchase any number he desires from his prison earnings at the rate of 6¢ each. He will receive a pre-stamped envelope and one sheet of paper for each letter, whether government issue or purchased on the canteen. Letters may be written to any person of good character and the names and addresses of persons with whom the inmate wishes to correspond are submitted to the censor. There will be very few persons with whom the inmate cannot correspond, and a directive will be sent from Ottawa covering these exceptions. (For the benefit of inmates wishing to add to their list

of correspondents, Mr. Reid has stated that you need only send him a "kite" listing the name and address of the new correspondent, rather than asking for another list.)

PAY SCALES may be due for revision in April. There may be four grades instead of the present three and pay will be 20¢ per day on grade one, 30¢ on two, 40¢ on three and 50¢ on grade four. Inmates will be allowed to spend half of this on the canteen and the other half will be compulsory savings. This means very little increase in the amount of spending money, but a great increase in the important area of savings. A man serving two years is released with around ten dollars now. The new system means he will have approximately \$50.00. This is no grand sum, but it is enough to give a man a chance to get started and as the length of the sentence increases, the money a man will have for his day of discharge also increases. Another important aspect is that there will be no set amount of men on each grade. A man will be placed on the pay level his efforts warrant, although he must work up one grade at a time.

PRISON INDUSTRY is still due for a revision, but no tangible results have been seen at present. This is a large problem and will undoubtedly take longer to organize. Some appointments have been made to new executive positions in this field and this year should see some changes.

SMOKE TIMES have been abolished. Inmates may now smoke at any time as long as there is no fire hazard. This rule was disliked by both staff and inmates and its abolition has done much to ease the relationship between officers and inmates.

These changes are the result of the Wardens' Conference held last October. In comparison to past conferences, this one has been fruitful indeed. Many more changes have been recommended and 1961 should see a start on the auditorium at this prison, the work camps to be built throughout the country and the satellite institution to be erected outside Collin's Bay walls. This last item is scheduled to be a dormitory type building to house all the men who work outside the walls; farm gang, quarry, powerhouse, etc.

1961 should be a good year for the inmate, but it'll be a better year for those who manage to be ex-inmates.

COMMITTEES

A man is a man is man
And he does what he can,
But a Committee is a Committee
And a Committee, methinks, never can.

The Atlantic



Winning Tiger-Cat Team, left to right: (Back row) Scott, Norbruis, Simons, Preston, Menard, Canary and Russell. (Front row) Beechener, Delaney, Burnside, Lane, Smith, Wilkinson, Farlinger and Cormier.

SPORTS at the Bay

Touch Football Schedule Ends

Old Man Winter has almost wiped out our sports programme now, but just before he made his entrance the Touch Football schedule was cut short and the playoffs were completed.

The season had started with a three-team league (very imaginatively named Argos Tiger-Cats and Alouettes) but half-way through the schedule it became apparent that the Als had no hope of doing anything—at any time. The other two teams seemed to be pretty well balanced as to strength,

but the Ti-Cats were higher on team spirit and this carried them to the league championship.

The Hamilton namesakes won the first game of the playoffs handily, but the Argos managed an upset victory in the second game to force the series into the final sixty minutes the following week. The day of the final game was crisp and clear, with a field that was muddy only in spots. The day remained nice right up 'til the end of the first half. And then the sun shone

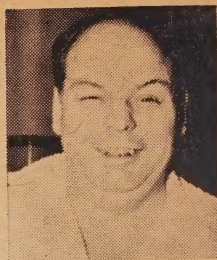
only on the Ti-Cat side of the field. They stopped the Argos on every play and Ross Hardy, the Argo manager, was desperately trying to rally his men. No go. Tigercat plays went for more and more yardage as the Argo men became mired deeper and deeper in the mud.



Award winners Bruce Beechener, Harvey Simons and Dino Kanary.

So, the season ended and three men were chosen for individual award: Harvey Simons was Line-man-of-the-Year, Dino Kanary took the Top Backfielder honour and L'il Bruce Beechener was voted Most Valuable Player. Beechener, who is also Tiger Cat manager, was the league's leading scorer, too, and certainly deserved the MVP vote he got.

**Commissioner
Maxam**



Just Notes: As spectator entertainment, touch football here at the Bay was a lost cause. There were three plays used by the teams, with very little variation and every pass went to one of the three receivers used. No surprises and very little in the way of excitement. But the game was enjoyed by the participants, and that, we feel, should be the object of games in prison: to be enjoyed. We're not professional—in many cases we're not even good amateurs—and we won't have to make a living at sports outside. So we play for fun. Commissioner Maxam is to be congratulated on his handling of the league and his officials, Richard Norris, Bob Buller, Jim W. and John Allen did a very competent job on the field as well. "If it hadn't been for my referees and linemen," said Commissioner of Football Maxam, "there wouldn't have been any games at all. They did an Excellent job under trying conditions and I feel they deserve recognition in the Diamond."

So they've got it, in the Commissioner's own words!

LETTERS

TO THE

EDITOR

Many thanks to all our readers who took the trouble to write or send a card to the magazine staff at Christmas. We had more cards than ever before, proving, we hope, that you are enjoying our magazine more. May the New Year bring success and happiness to all The Diamond's readers, both inside and out.

Gentlemen:

That was a fine Christmas issue — and a clever cover and envelope. You are getting real professional on The Diamond!

Hope you'll all be out soon and back contributing to society. We need smart people.

Dorothy Hatton,
Editor
ABITIBI Magazine

Editor:.. *Thanks, Miss Hatton. We've been enjoying ABITIBI and wondering how we could go about exchanging with other industrial journals. Can you give us any information on this?*

Dear Gentlemen:

Enclosed please find material for your Jovial Jester page.

I enjoy reading The Diamond and I look forward to each copy. In one of your previous issues you asked for comments on your new covers. I think it's refreshing and I like it. Please keep up the good work.

Sincerely,
Claire Legault
Hamilton

Dear Sir:

Will you please use the enclosed either to help "The Diamond's" shoe string from becoming worse frayed, or to help the work of finding jobs for prisoners through "Prisoner Potential". I saw the article on Prisoner Potential in the Toronto Globe & Mail and feel it is a worthwhile project.

Yours truly,
D.E. Coate
Rosseau, Ontario

LETTERS CONTINUED:

Dear Sir:

We read *The Diamond* and found it interesting and enjoyable.

Enclosed is one dollar for a year's subscription. I think your publication is well worth that and also feel that if more people could read just one copy, they would also subscribe.

Yours Sincerely,
(Mrs.) S. Hepburn
Kingston

Dear Sir:

I would like to commend you on your wonderful magazine! In fact, it is so interesting that someone took my issue from the mail this month and I was delivered only an empty envelope.

Congratulations once again.

Yours truly,
(Mrs.) J. McCrea
Toronto

Dear Sir:

I am writing to ask why I have not received my *Diamond*.

I bought a subscription to your magazine at the Kingston Fall Fair and have not, as yet, received an issue

Yours truly,
Mr. Cecil Arnot
Godfrey

Editor: Mr. Arnot's letter is just one of the many complaints we have been receiving about our poor service. The complaints have been numerous from inmates, too. But we have absolutely no control over the printing of our magazine as it is done at nearby Kingston Pen. The *Diamond* staff are as annoyed as the subscribers, but the only thing we can do is promise to deliver 12 consecutive issues, in whatever time they arrive from the printer. We have, however, been mulling over the idea of making our magazine a bi-monthly and increasing the size to 60 pages. The big problem here is that we cannot make refunds to any subscribers who do not like this arrangement. Our money is not handled as freely as that of an outside publication, as you may well imagine. We would be interested in hearing from any of our readers who may either object to this, or be in favour of it. One of the benefits of a bi-monthly would be that we would save on mailing costs and this money could be used to improve the magazine's appearance. Another benefit would be a larger magazine with a greater variety of articles and stories. On the deficit side, the magazine would only be delivered to your home or office every two months. But then, that would be as good as we are doing now, wouldn't it?

We would appreciate hearing the views of our readers on this proposed change of schedule and, if there are not too many against the idea, we will endeavour to make the switch from monthly to bi-monthly this summer.